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DAN SMOOT

ISRAEL—PART IV

Israel and the Soviet Union display bristling hostility toward each other, while the U.S. and Israel are still regarded as inseparable friends. Yet, there is more ideological and cultural kinship between Israel and the Soviet Union than between Israel and the United States.

Though our government has been socializing the U.S. economy (in violation of our Constitution), our government officials still pay lip service to "free enterprise." A preponderant majority of Americans (though accepting socialism under false labels) are emotionally and historically committed to a free-enterprise economy. They reject the *idea* of converting America into a socialist state. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, is historically and ideologically committed to socialism. So is Israel. Most of Israel's agricultural production is on collective farms like the collective farms of communist China and the Soviet Union. Indeed, many entire settlements in Israel are communal communities of the type which is the ideal and ultimate goal of communism.

Concerning the cultural kinship between the Soviet Union and Israel, note this important fact: in recent years, European (or Western) Jews have been leaving Israel in significant numbers. Simultaneously, there has been an influx into Israel of oriental Jews (sometimes called "Arab" Jews).[1] Today, in Israel, oriental Jews (whose cultural roots are in the East, as Russia's are), outnumber European Jews (whose cultural roots are in the West, as America's are).

The historical record shows that American Presidents have been pro-Israel ever since Israel came into existence. President Truman's role in helping create the state of Israel, in defiance of the counsel of his own diplomatic and military advisers, is well known. Recently (January 5, 1969), on a nationwide tv broadcast, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield said "Presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy indicated that we have a moral and emotional commitment to Israel."[2]

There can be no doubt about President Johnson's pro-Israel bias. When the 1967 Arab-Israeli war

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erupted, a U.S. State Department official said the U.S. attitude was "neutral in thought, word, and deed." This aroused the ire of President Johnson, who did not try to conceal his bias toward Israel.[6] Johnson would have ordered military action on the side of Israel in the 1967 war, if Israel had appeared to be losing. Hence, the quick Israeli victory, obviating need for U.S. intervention, pleased the President.[3] After the 1967 war, Johnson supported Israel's position that there should be no Israeli withdrawal from conquered territory until secure and recognized boundaries were established.[4] It was Johnson who asked congressional authorization for the sale of 50 jet fighters to Israel to replace planes lost or damaged in the 1967 war. Hubert Humphrey, as a spokesman for the Johnson administration, was aggressively pro-Israel.

Between the 1956 and 1967 Arab-Israeli wars, the Soviet Union gave a huge quantity of aid to Arab countries; and so did the U.S. ($3.4 billion in U.S. economic aid to Arabs; $300 million in military aid).[5] But the *per capita* aid which the U.S. government gave Israel in the 1956-1967 period was at least seven times greater than the *per capita* aid it gave Arab countries.

Clearly, in the eyes of the world, the opposing sides in the 1967 war were "client" states: Israel, client of the U.S.; Arab nations, clients of the U.S.S.R.

At first glance, the Soviet Union may seem to have been on the losing side: Arabs were shattered, with humiliating ease and speed. Yet, when the war ended, the Soviets were nearer than ever before to one of their most cherished goals in the Middle East — eliminating American influence in the Arab world, establishing Soviet dominance.

There has been speculation that the Soviets encouraged Egyptian bluster and truculence to give Israel provocation for initiating the 1967 war — to increase Egyptian dependence on the Soviet Union. At any rate, Soviet influence in Egypt did become much stronger after the 1967 war. One significant result is that the Soviet Navy now has Mediterranean bases in Egyptian ports — an ancient Russian ambition which previous communist leaders and the czars before them were never able to realize.[7]

The Israeli raid on Beirut airport (December 28, 1968) brought more significant gain for the Soviets in the Middle East, loss for the United States. On January 2, 1969, for example, the Lebanese cabinet decided to admit Soviet Navy ships to Lebanese ports upon request, but ruled that U.S. naval vessels would no longer be welcome — because of the U.S. sale of jet fighters to Israel. This was a sharp reversal of Lebanese policy, which theretofore had been distinctly more friendly to the U.S. than to the Soviets.[8]

Behold, then, this strange situation: Israel and the Soviet Union, while excoriating each other with harsh words, are pursuing a common objective in the Middle East: to isolate all Arab countries from the United States and drive them into the Soviet orbit.

The U.S. government's attitude toward the Middle East armaments race is equally strange. On December 27, 1968, U.S. officials announced that 50 jet fighters would be sold to Israel. On December 28, Israeli airborne troops raided the Beirut airport. On December 29, U.S. officials denounced Israel for the Beirut raid. On December 30, U.S. military sources said they expect the Soviets to sell Egypt 200 more jet fighters, and to make other arms deals with Arab states, as a result of the U.S. sale of jets to Israel.[9] And on December 30, 1968, the U.S. government issued a plea for Middle Eastern disarmament.[10]

What will President Nixon do about the Middle East? At present, it is hard to tell.

The 1968 Republican Party platform said:

"In the tinderbox of the Middle East . . . . we will seek an end to the arms race through international agreement and the stationing of peacekeeping forces of the United Nations in areas of severe tension . . . .

"Nevertheless, the Soviets persist in building an imbalance of military forces in this region. The fact of a growing menace to Israel is undeniable. Her forces must be kept at a commensurate strength both for her protection and to help keep the peace of the area. The United

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States, therefore, will provide countervailing help to Israel, such as supersonic fighters, as necessary for these purposes."[11]

During the 1968 campaign, Richard Nixon sounded even more pro-Israel than Lyndon Johnson. Speaking to B'nai B'rith, Nixon promised military aid to "tip the balance" of Middle Eastern military power in Israel's favor. This Nixon promise was intended not only as a bid for zionist political support, but also as an effort to eliminate the hostility of the news media, most of which is pro-Israel.[12]

Having squeaked through to victory, without zionist support, Nixon apparently tried to back off a bit from his promise to help Israel achieve military superiority over the Arabs.[12] Nixon's emissary to the Middle East, William Scranton, came home saying the U.S. should pursue a more "even-handed" policy in the area — that is, a policy less partial to Israel.[13]

Zionists howled; and Nixon tried to placate them by granting a much-publicized interview with Moshe Dayan, Israeli defense minister. Prior to that, the President-elect had stood firm on the position that he would see no foreign leaders until after his inauguration.[12]

What *should* President Nixon do about the Middle East?

There is really only one safe and sensible way out of the harassing dilemmas which our political leadership has created for us in the Middle East and elsewhere — and that is, to return, as quickly as possible, to the policy of benign neutrality which George Washington recommended in his Farewell Address and which this nation followed for more than a century. Neither give offense to other nations, nor take any. Neither grant special favors to a foreign nation, nor expect any. Show partiality to none. Sternly reject all foreign influence on American policy, whether exerted from within or from without. Keep our government out of the wars, revolutions, and political turmoil of other countries. We have enough problems of our own.

It was tragically wrong for us to get involved in the Middle Eastern mess in the first place. But, having made the error, must we perpetuate it? We are so deeply involved now that we probably should not instantly wash our hands of the problem. We could and should, however, immediately stop all direct U.S. government intervention in the Middle East. Specifically, the U.S. government:

— should officially declare its neutrality in the Middle East and strictly observe neutrality in deed and word;

— should stop giving aid of any kind to Arab nations and to Israel;

— should stop the sale of the 50 jet fighters to Israel, and prohibit any other sales of armaments either to Israel or to Arab countries;

— should eliminate the privilege of tax exemption for any organization that collects funds in the U.S. for transfer to Israel or to Arab countries, and take any other steps necessary to prohibit the flow of tax-free private funds from the U.S. to Israel or from the U.S. to Arab countries.

While withdrawing from direct intervention, the U.S. should work diplomatically for a solution to dangerous Middle Eastern problems which our meddling helped create. Our efforts should be made through traditional diplomacy, and not through the United Nations, because the UN is worse than useless as a means of solving international problems and settling international disputes.

Our diplomacy should be aimed at the accomplishment of a three-point program:

(1) The historical boundaries of the land known as Palestine prior to the creation of the state of Israel should be identified; and a new political state, with dominion over the entire area, should be created. It should not be a Jewish-governed state, or a Christian-governed state, or a Moslem-governed state, or any other kind of theocratic state, which is an anachronism in our time. It should be a state ruled by a representative government, answerable to all inhabitants, of whatever creed, who qualify as voters.

(2) The property and other rights of all present inhabitants of Palestine should be scrupulously protected.

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(3) All Palestinians — Moslem, Christian, Jew, or otherwise — who have been driven from their homelands as a consequence of Arab-Israeli conflicts should be repatriated and indemnified for loss of property. The indemnification should be determined and provided by the government of the new nation of Palestine.

That program, if accomplished, might achieve a just and enduring peace in the Middle East.

The people and governments of the area may not respond to U.S. diplomatic pressures and leadership toward accomplishing such a program. The hatreds and entrenched interests may be so deeply rooted that no fair and sensible program can be adopted.

But our government should try, because its previous actions have given it a responsibility. If, in the end, all U.S. efforts fail, we can at least get out with good conscience.

Would American neutrality ease and speed communist control of all Arab states? No one knows; but we do know that American intervention in the Middle East turned the once-friendly Arabs away from us, and toward our deadliest enemy.

Though Arab states, like Israel, have adopted the subtle form of communism called *socialism*, undisguised communism is repugnant to most Arabs, because it is openly atheistic; and most Arabs are Moslems. Generally, Moslems are such militant fighters for their religious faith that they scorn close alliance with atheists. This condition is reflected by the fact that the Communist Party is still outlawed in most Arab countries, despite the vast amount of aid they have received from the Soviets.(14)

Arab bitterness toward the United States for its role in helping carve a zionist state from the heart of the Arab homeland made it possible for pro-communist dictators like Nasser to push the Arab world into the Soviet orbit — during the very period when Arabs were receiving even more aid from the U.S. than from the Soviets.

From the record, it is plausible to assume that communist influence in the Arab world would decline, rather than grow, if the United States adopted a clear policy of impartial non-intervention.

But (plausibilities and assumptions aside) the important thing is to get the U.S. out of all treaties, agreements, and programs with inherent possibility of involving us in a Middle Eastern war — before the desert sands are red with American blood.

FOOTNOTES

(1) *Human Events*, Dec. 28, 1968, p. 13
(2) AP dispatch from Washington, *The Dallas Morning News*, Jan. 6, 1969, p. A4
(3) *U.S. News & World Report*, June 26, 1967, p. 34
(4) *The Dallas Morning News*, Jan. 1, 1969, p. A4
(5) *U.S. News & World Report*, June 26, 1967, p. 28
(6) *U.S. News & World Report*, June 19, 1967, p. 28
(7) "Intelligence Report," *Parade*, Dec. 17, 1967, p. 5
(8) Extension of Remarks of U.S. Rep. John Rarick, *Congressional Record* (daily), Jan. 6, 1969, p. E50
(9) *The Dallas Morning News*, Dec. 31, 1968, p. A3
(10) *The Dallas Times Herald*, Dec. 30, 1968, p. A1
(11) *1968 Congressional Quarterly Almanac*, p. 994
(12) "Israeli Overkill?", *National Review*, Jan. 14, 1969, p. 15
(13) *Time* magazine, Jan. 3, 1969
(14) "Middle East: Tom Anderson Reports From the Scene," *American Opinion*, February, 1969, p. 48

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